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5 November 1945

Honorable John J. McCloy  
Assistant Secretary of War  
War Department  
Washington, D. C.

Sir:

1. Reference is made to Executive Order # 9821 dated 20 September 1945 and memorandum from the Secretary of War to the Director, SSU, dated 27 September 1945. In accordance with Secretary Patterson's direction in his 27 September letter that this unit continue the program of liquidation of these activities and personnel which no longer are necessary I have directed the liquidation by 1 December 1945 of the Field Photographic Branch of this unit.

2. The Field Photographic Branch has some 750,000 feet of motion picture film (approximately 200,000 negative, 250,000 pre-print material and 300,000 print) which OSS produced during the war, requiring disposition by 1 December. With the exception of approximately 15%, all this material is edited. Some of the film is of present historical value, being the only photographic record in existence of clandestine intelligence and operational activity of OSS and OSS scientific developments, and has a perpetual training value for the future. The nature of the films will in most instances require their continued classification in restricted or higher categories.

3. Storage of these films has been and is now provided in the storage vaults of the laboratories of the Department of Agriculture (sixth wing, South Building).

4. Films made for other governmental agencies have been and are currently being turned over to those agencies. With respect to these, no problems of custody arise.

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5. Since, on 1 December 1945, no Branch of SSU will have functions or facilities for the appropriate storage and handling of these films, it is recommended:

a. That the Office of the Assistant Secretary of War instruct the Army Pictorial Service to incorporate the film herein reported on into the Central War Department Film Library or such other unit within the Army Pictorial Service as it deems appropriate.


b. That this unit be authorized to arrange with the Department of Agriculture for the retention of these films in the present repository until such time as the Army Pictorial Service can arrange for storage elsewhere.

c. That the security classification of these films be established jointly by the Strategic Services Unit of the War Department and the War Department's agency for classifying this type of material, presently the Bureau of Public Relations.

6. The foregoing recommendations are the result of conferences held with representatives of the Army Pictorial Service and the Pictorial Branch of the Bureau of Public Relations.

Respectfully,

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Brigadier General  
Director